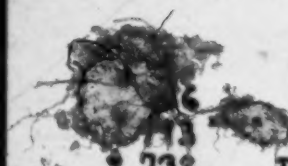
as a means for diesusing and strengthening a risteña family's economic and social interests within the parish. There are two conspicuous exceptions. Should a boy bear a physical disability so severe that he will be unable to perform the basic subsistence activities of Amhara men, particularly plowing, he may be enrolled in the parish school as a prelude to a non-agricultural career beyond his natal parish. The alternatives are few. Work as an artisan is appropriate for Muslim and Falasha, but shameful for an Amhara; while employment as a merchant is less objectionable, the peasant is generally without the necessary skills, contacts, and capital; military service is beyond his abilities; thus, only the Church and government remain. Regarding the Church, the priesthood is closed to him, since a priest must be physically whole, and capable of standing unassisted during the performance of the Mass. The remaining ecclesiastical and government career choices assume that a boy will achieve literacy at the parish school and subsequently depart from his natal community. The second exception to the local focus of the parish school, is the small number of boys who are offspring of debtera-teachers serving in parish churches. The ties of these men to their parishes-of-residence are usually only professional, and they are rarely risteñas, it is moreover their professional ethos which influences them to seek an extensive

*755 *764 *793 application. In a medical context, he is adept in all but the chirurgeon's domain, and his works are perceived as strong. In addition to therapy, he is an expert diag-
[754] nostician, and giver of prophylaxis. Finally, the debtera's medical powers are perceived as only an aspect of the more general powers he possesses, and which he displays in various non-medical works affecting property, interpersonal relations, and, importantly, the sending of illness.

*756 *793 •732 Reconstructing the Debtera's Biography. Laymen find confirmation of the putatively necessary ties which bind debtera to ganel in the relatively high proportion of physically aberrant debteras. Laymen explain these disabilities as evidence of the mischief played by the capricious ganels on their debtera partners. While debteras constitute only a minute portion of the highland population, they are a highly visible one. Debteras, particularly abinet-practicing ones, tend to live in towns. There, they advertize their presence for the multitudes, during the performance of the Mass, in the churchyard conversing among colleagues, or as a center from which their students circulate on their daily begging. For the layman, the appearance of achondroplastic, pituitary, and tubercular dwarfs, of cripples with shrivelled limbs---all professional confreres and all living within the radius of two or three miles---bears impressive wit-

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder



...o the ganel-tainted character of the debtera.

*732 The layman simplifies the debtera's career by supposing that most debteras (certainly the abinet-practicing ones) are former priests, men who broke their priestly vows by committing adultery. Impelled by shame to leave the natal community along a path of increasingly sinful deeds, they are morally spoiled even before becoming debteras. In reality, only a very small proportion of debteras have been recruited this way, for such men are generally ill-suited in age, intellect, and temperament to the lengthy, arduous, and often demeaning apprenticeship required of the debtera. The breaking of priestly vows, is, in addition, a very serious matter, and few men would have the temerity to mock the supernaturals of the Church a second time.

TECHNICAL AND MORAL ASPECTS OF GANEL-DERIVED POWER

*756 *793 *755 77K The layman's distinction between fragmented secular healing powers and the generic power of the debtera is based on the misconception that the complicity of ganels stands behind the awakiy debtera's medical superiority. In reality, the debtera acquires his repertoire of herbal therapies, digans, kifat recipes, and awdunigist texts individually or in small numbers, from fellow practitioners. Further, although the ties between an awakiy